

BIENVILLE TRAIL

Information and Hiking Instructions

① Leave Scout Island by turning left on to Harrison Avenue; follow Harrison to Marconi Drive; turn left. Continue on Marconi to Roosevelt Mall. Walk through Mall to New Orleans Museum of Art.

② Visit the State Museum at the Presbytere next door to the Saint Louis Cathedral. Admission for uniformed Scout groups is free.

③ "Duelling Oaks." This is approximately 200 yards to the left of the Museum when passing the Museum. Once this was a remote spot where the Creoles settled arguments with sword and pistol duels. The Creoles were the French and Spanish Aristocracy of old New Orleans.

④ Take either Pirates Alley or Pere Antoine's Alley on either side of the Cathedral to Royal Street. The small enclosed park is St. Anthony's Garden which used to be a famed duelling ground in the city's early days. Cross Royal Street and follow Orleans Street down to Dauphine

and turn left. Along the way you will see ceramic markers that mistakenly label this to be Bayou Road. In Spanish times this street was the rear of the city and travelers coming in the trail turned and followed the path of this street. You follow it to Conti Street. On the corner at 401 Dauphine is one of several houses reputed to have been occupied by John James Audubon.

⑤ At Conti Street turn right and proceed to the Musee Conti at 917 Conti Street.

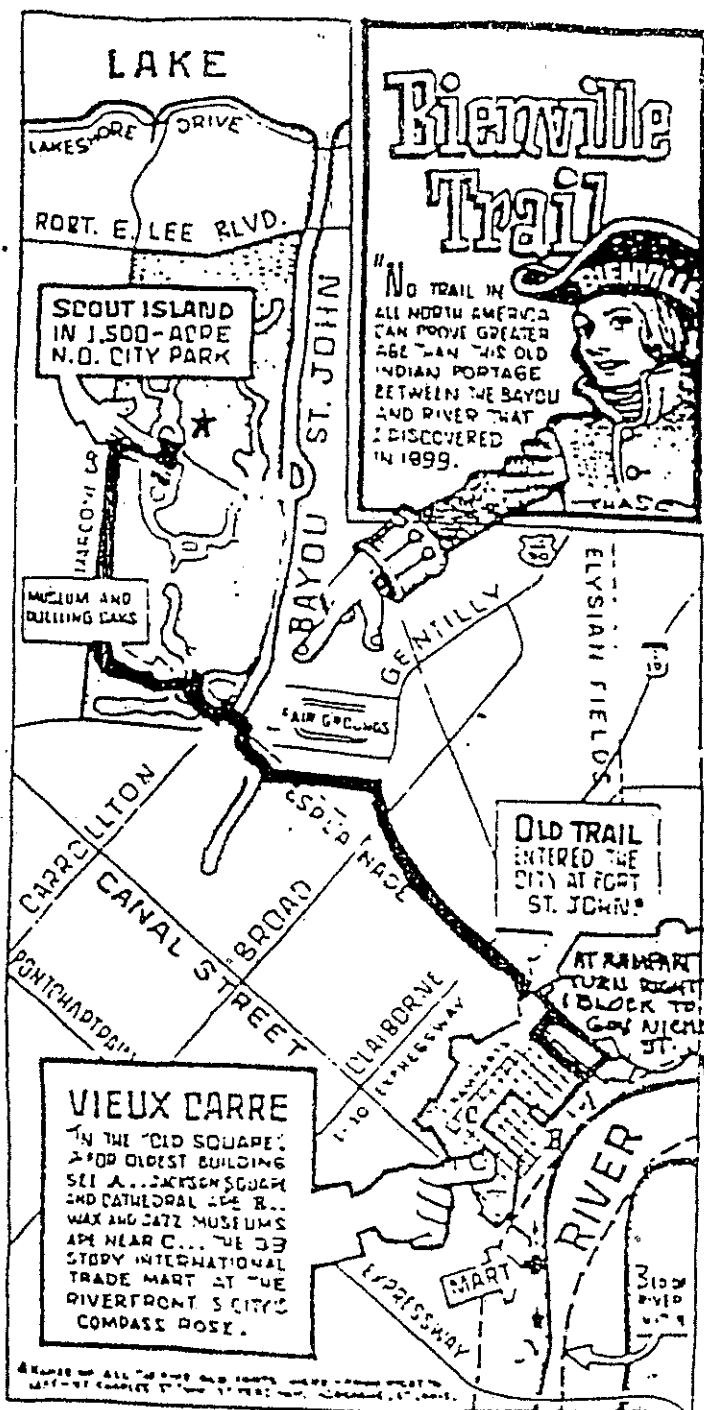
**MUSEE CONTI WAX MUSEUM OPTIONAL
ASK FOR SCOUT PRICE**

⑥ Return along Conti toward the river to Decatur, which used to be called Levee Street, and to the triangle intersection where N. Peters starts — it used to be called New Levee Street. This is because the river kept changing its course and building up more land. Turn right on Decatur, continue on past the Custom House to Canal Street and turn left.

You can see the International Trade Mart, 33 stories tall, on the river bank. Had it been built there when New Orleans was founded in 1718, the Trade Mart would have been in mid-river. You will find the view from the Mart's top an exciting one. The river at the foot of Canal Street is 100 feet deep. Over at the foot of Gov. Nicholls Street it is 200 feet deep. There is a fee for admittance to the tower.

The Bienville Trail Committee hopes you will "Pass a good time" during your hike of the trail.

Fees are subject to change at any time. Therefore these items are optional to the hiker.



⑦ Return to Museum and proceed to entrance of City Park marked by statue of General Beuregard. Cross the bridge and turn right on Moss Street, continue on until you reach 1300 Moss Street. After crossing the bridge look ahead and you will see many Spanish-West Indian type plantation homes. In early Spanish days (from 1763 to 1803) this neighborhood was a summer resort and an important part of the port. That's why the colonial plantation house at 1300 Moss Street is called the "Spanish Custom House." Read the plaque on the gate.

⑧ Turn left at the Spanish Custom House and you are on Grand Route St. John — beginning of the overland portage from the Bayou to the River. Note the historical marker near the Bayou.

⑨ Continuing along Grand Route St. John, you cross Esplanade Avenue for the first time. This was the fashionable street of the Creoles. Grand Route St. John ends at Gentilly Road where you turn right for two blocks.

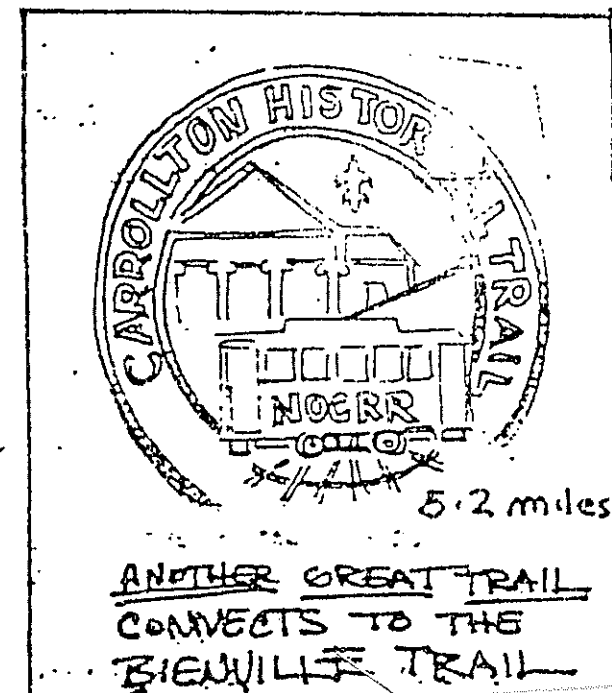
⑩ Crossing Rampart you are now in the Vieux Carre. They say the best way to see this world famous neighborhood is to "get lost." But Scouts never get lost, so continue along Gov. Nicholls Street by the Old Spanish Stables at #724 to Royal Street. At this corner — No. 1140 Royal — is the famous Haunted House. Details of how it came to be haunted are vividly presented by Musee Conti, the city's famous wax museum at 917 Conti Street which you will visit later.

⑪ Everything you see in the Vieux Carre is interesting. Continue along Gov. Nicholls to Chartres Street and turn right. Immediately across the street you will see the Ursulines Convent. This building is probably the oldest in the Mississippi Valley. It was completed in 1734 for the Ursuline nuns. After many years use as a convent, the building became the home of the Archbishop of New Orleans. It is now a national historic site.

⑫ Across the street from the convent is the Beuregard House, home of the Confederate General on the horse you saw at City Park.

⑬ Continuing down Chartres past many old and quaint places you come to Jackson Square — the Place d'Armes (or drill ground) of colonial New Orleans. Flanking the historic St. Louis Cathedral are the equally ancient Cabildo and Presbytere. The two long red buildings flanking Jackson Square are the Pontalba Buildings built in 1848-50 by Madame Pontalba. Each building contains sixteen separate apartments three stories high.

⑭ Visit Saint Louis Cathedral. An attendant is usually available to give you a short guided tour. The Cathedral dates from 1794 but it is the third church on the site. A hurricane destroyed the first in 1723 and a fire burned the second in 1785. The Cathedral was named for Saint Louis, who was King of France in the 13th Century.



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CAMPING AVAILABLE IN CITY PARK - SEE SCOUT SERVICE CENTER.

History of The Bienville Trail

Jean Baptiste Le Moyne, Sieur de Bienville, discovered this bayou and trail in 1699. He named the bayou St. John for his patron saint. Bienville joined the French Navy at the age of 12. When he was 14 he received his first battle wounds. He was 17 when he came to the Gulf Coast with Iberville, his older brother, to establish French posts to guard the lower river valley of Louisiana. As a Canadian scout and sailor, young Bienville was certainly a "boy" scout.

But long before the French came in 1699, Indians used this trail from the bayou to the river. It was called a "Portage" because they ported, or carried, their canoes from the waters of the bayou to the river. In 1718 Bienville founded the City of New Orleans at the river end of the trail or portage. A person was able to walk about a mile from the river to Bayou St. John. He could then go by boat to Lake Pontchartrain which connected to the Gulf of Mexico by the way of Lake Borne. This was easier than going down the river "...through...very difficult country, often flooded and filled with alligators, serpents, and other venomous beasts."

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